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## For Immediate Release

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**Contacts:** Roger Haydon, (360) 902-9479  
Kristin Alexander, (360) 902-9307  
Michael Wilson, (360) 902-9317

### **Disaster Unemployment Assistance for Washington Flood Victims**

Special financial assistance is available for workers in 15 counties who lost jobs, cannot get to work, or were injured because of severe storms and flooding that struck Washington between Oct. 15-23, the Washington State Employment Security Department announced.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available to workers in Chelan, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Okanogan, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom counties who became unemployed as a result of the storm and flood, but who don't qualify for other unemployment benefits.

The program does not extend regular unemployment or other benefits paid by the Employment Security Department. Qualified applicants will be eligible to receive \$165 to \$510 per week in benefits.

Employment Security Commissioner Sylvia P. Mundy encourages unemployed workers who think they may be eligible to apply.

Applications can be obtained online at <http://www.wa.gov/esd/ui/dua.htm>. Requests can also be made by phone at (360) 902-9479, e-mail at [dua@esd.wa.gov](mailto:dua@esd.wa.gov), or in person at local WorkSource centers. Callers can request that an application be mailed or faxed to them.

Applications are accepted until Dec. 18, 2003. Applications received after that time should include an explanation of why it is being filed after the Dec. 18 deadline.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance became available with President George Bush's approval of Governor Gary Locke's request for Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA) assistance for residents of 15 counties hardest hit by last month's storm.

People may be eligible for this assistance if they work or reside in any of the counties listed above, are not eligible for any other type of regular or extended unemployment benefits, and as a result of the severe storm and flooding they:

- no longer have a job or could not return to a job starting Oct. 15, 2003, or
- are unable to reach their place of employment, or
- cannot work because of an injury sustained in the disaster.

Self-employed individuals are also eligible for DUA if they are unemployed as a direct result of the disaster. Self-employed individuals must submit a copy of their 2002 tax year return or documentation showing their net earnings from tax year 2002 with their DUA application.